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Residents losing optimism as Bridgeton Landfill odor remains following work

<http://www.kmov.com/news/editors-pick/Residents-losing-optimism-as-Bridgeton-Landfill-odor-remains-following-work-211076721.html>

by Emily Rau / KMOV.com Staff

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(KMOV.com) – The Bridgeton Landfill, having completed it's pipe abandonment project, is set to begin the next phase of improvements.

Despite the pipe project being completed, the smell is continuing to plague residents.

"I took the dog out for a walk, got about 2 blocks away," said Alice Mack. "My eyes started to burn my nose burned, I started wheezing- it was nauseating. So we came back."

Mack lives across the road from the landfill and has been no stranger to the odor. After dealing with the odor day in and day out, Mack says it begins to wear on her.

"As you cross Page and approach maybe you've kind of forgotten about it and all of a sudden it's like 'oh yeah. That's waiting for me,'" she said. "The closer you get to home the worse it gets. It's just sad."

To combat the odor, the landfill removed six concrete underground pipes. During that time, the odor was expected to increase. To offset this, the landfill owners offered to move residents close to the landfill to hotels in the area.

While some took the offer, many- like Mack - didn't feel safe leaving their homes unattended.

"We were afraid to leave our homes unattended since it had been announced that gee they're are gonna be 124 homes with nobody in them!" she said.

Monday the Bridgeton Landfill is set to begin installing an ethylene vinyl alcohol capping system.

A release by the landfill owners claims the capping system will serve as a more effective barrier against the smell, and will be installed across 32 acres of the landfill.

Despite predictions the plan will abate the smell, Mack isn't expecting relief any time soon.

"Of course I want it to go away but I'm not even sure how possible that is," she said. "They have not made a bunch of empty promises. They have never said 'gee it's gonna all get better just hang in there,' which I guess is good but it's also not very comforting."

The Department of Natural resources released a statement on its website Tuesday alerting people to the possibility of the odor once again increasing.

"Republic Services notified the department this morning that the driller replacing a leachate collection sump (LCS-4) has reached the bottom of boring and is now ready to install the sump casing materials. As this occurs, the odors being generated in this area of the landfill are expected to increase. Republic Services is unsure how long it will take to get the sump materials installed and grouted so that the odors are halted. Until that time, we will experience higher-than-normal odors."